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FOREIGN NEWS ON APPLES

1924 AMERICAN APPLES STILL IN BRITISH MARKETS

What may be considered a triumph in the scientific handling, storing and transporting of apples occurred with the sale of a carload of 1924 Winesaps from the Pacific Northwest in Glasgow on July 28th. Coming after the 1925 apple crop from Australia and New Zealand had been practically cleaned up this consignment arrived in Great Britain in splendid condition and sold for prices that ruled higher than the average received for the fresh crop and nearly four times as much as the prices paid for 1925 Portuguese apples sold on the same day.

The fruit was grown on a ranch at Yakima, Washington and was shipped from Seattle. The secret of its splendid condition at this late season was due to the observance of scientific handling of the fruit from the time it was picked from the trees until it was discharged on the quay in Glasgow nearly 8,000 miles distant. The apples were first wrapped in oiled paper, placed immediately in cold storage at temperatures between 30 and 32 degrees and held under good conditions of storage in Yakima up until the time of shipment. They were then loaded in a fully iced refrigerator car in which the fullest refrigeration was made possible by applying salt to the ice at the time of shipment. At New York the fruit was transferred to the refrigerator chambers of the S.S. Cameronia. A noteworthy achievement in connection with this shipment was that of holding the apples in cold storage at the shipping point until the middle of the summer, then transporting them across the continent under summer temperatures for final destination in British markets.

Upon arrival in Glasgow, the large sizes of apples, which were numerous enough in the shipment to make a fair test, showed some slight effects of the long carriage, evident in box bruises and a few over-ripe fruits. Sizes smaller than 150, however, were in the pink of condition, firm, and crisp, with an exceptionally fine flavour. Blue mold decay was evident only in fruit that had been injured in packing and did not detract from the shipment more than the usual occurrence of this defect in late March shipments. The fancy and "C" grade fruit retained its green colour to a surprising degree and gave the trade the impression that the fruit still had vitality although there was a tendency to be sceptical on this point because of the extreme lateness of the season and the prevailing summer temperatures to which it had to be exposed.

Although the buying trade was very much surprised to see American apples after a lapse of two months, during which time their attention had been devoted to the 1925 crop from Australia and New Zealand, a great deal of interest was manifest. The fruit sold readily at prices that were mostly from 18/- to 19/- (\$4.37 - \$4.62) for the Extra Fancy Grade, 17/- to 18/- (\$4.13 - \$4.37) for the Fancy Grade, and 15/- to 15/6 (\$3.64 - \$3.77) for the "C" Grade. It should be noted that the current price

for Australian and New Zealand apples in British markets was from 11/- to 13/- (\$2.67 - \$3.16) while Portuguese apples sold the same day for from 7/- to 9/- (\$1.70 - \$2.19) for cases weighing 120 pounds. Had the trade felt more confidence in the vitality of the apples when placed upon the market there is no question but that the bidding would have been much more active and that the prices realized would have been correspondingly higher, since there is a dearth of high quality red apples in British markets during this period.

This attempt at extending the marketing season for American apples in export markets is worthy of much commendation. It is not probable that large quantities of our apples can be marketed in foreign countries in competition with the new crops from our competitors, but as long as we can deliver a superior fruit it will be justly appreciated and will bring returns that reflect its comparative condition. The success of the shipment also emphasises the great importance that attaches to careful supervision of all details connected with the conservation of the fruit when it is intended for marketing over an extended season.

In this connection American fruit growers and shippers should bear in mind that energy devoted to improved handling, storage and transportation of their apples is the one best means that lies within their hands to hold and extend their foreign markets against aggressive competition from all parts of the world. Apple growers within the British Empire are expending much energy and money in fostering a preference for Imperial products. Within this field they have great advertising opportunities which are permanently excluded from American growers. The only path that is open to American growers to meet this situation lies in the direction of placing before British consumers a product that is irreproachable in quality and condition throughout the season and allowing the customer to be the judge. So long as consumers can recognize superiority in an article they will continue to demand it, regardless of propaganda or other influences that may be brought to bear. In cultivating this preference for American fruit our growers and shippers must devote added attention to "delivering the goods" in order that this superiority may be real and quickly apparent to our foreign customers. This trial shipment of apples illustrates what may be done when proper attention is paid to all factors governing the conservation of fruit.

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